

Executive Registry  
67-4878/2



CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20505

OFFICE OF DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

20 October 1967

PERSONAL ✓

Dear Nels,

After our conversation with regard to NIE 11-7, I thought it would be a good idea to discuss this whole matter with the Board of National Estimates. It occurred to me that one of the features of NIE 11-7, or any other NIE for that matter, is that we don't always make sure in the statement of the problem or a scope note just what the publication covers and what its relationships is to other NIEs. In this case we assumed that it would be clear that we were discussing on a generalized plane the broad direction of Soviet policy in the current phase, and that the other NIEs on Soviet policy in successive issuances constitute a corpus of judgment. Consequently we concluded that there is no need to repeat in each paper all that could be and had been said on so large a subject.

It was with the above reasoning in mind that NIE 11-7 cross-referenced a number of other papers, specifically SNIE 11-11-67, NIE 11-5-67, NIE 11-4-67, NIE 11-6-67 and SNIE 11-13-67. By taking these papers as a body we would hope that the readers would perceive that we do recognize the sine curves and opportunistic aspects of Soviet policy.

One of the things that always troubles us in any of these efforts is the changes of degree that take place in Soviet activities. This is particularly true in the Naval Section of NIE 11-6-67 as to the specifics of the Soviet Naval presence in the Mediterranean. Written two months later the flavor would be somewhat different although I'm inclined to think the principal thrust would be the same since the guts of the paper really lie in Sections III and IV.

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I hope the above may be of some interest to you in explaining how we go about these things and that you will not hesitate to provide me with any comments or suggestions you may have on present or future work in this area. You can go about this in one of three ways: (1) inject your views through DIA for their representatives to bring to the attention of our people, (2) provide views and suggestions to  so that his representatives and representations will make your views known over here or (3) if you would like an informal channel, simply drop me a personal note by name, addressed to Deputy Director of Central Intelligence and forward it through the Government Courier Service to Stop #64.

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With warmest personal regards,

Sincerely,

/s/

Rufus Taylor  
Vice Admiral, U. S. Navy

Vice Admiral Nels C. Johnson  
Director J-5 (Plans & Policy)  
Joint Staff, Department of Defense  
Room 2 E 1000, The Pentagon

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19 October 1967

MEMORANDUM FOR ADMIRAL TAYLOR

SUBJECT: Comments of Admiral Johnson on NIE 11-7-67,  
"Soviet Foreign Policy," dated 28 September 1967

1. Your memorandum of 17 October concerning Admiral Johnson's comments is a useful reminder that we have readers for these publications who do not understand what we often assume is self-evident. In this case, we assumed that it would be clear: (a) that we were discussing on a generalized plane the broad direction of Soviet policy in the current phase, and (b) that the NIEs on Soviet policy in successive issuances constitute a corpus of judgment and that consequently there is no need to repeat in each paper all that could be said on so large a subject. The remedy, as you suggest, is to be sure that, in the statement of the problem or a scope note, we make perfectly clear what each publication covers.

2. In fact, for a careful reader of NIE 11-7-67, two things should be evident: first, that we do recognize the opportunistic character of Soviet policy, a point which we have emphasized repeatedly in the predecessors to 11-7-67, and, second, that particular areas where Soviet policy is active or may seize opportunities are discussed in other papers referred to in footnotes. The papers cross-referenced in 11-7-67 are the following: SNIE 11-11-67, "Soviet Attitudes and Intentions Toward the Vietnam War," dated 4 May 1967; NIE 11-5-67, "Soviet Economic Problems and Prospects," dated 25 May 1967; NIE 11-4-67, "Main Trends in Soviet Military Policy," dated 20 July 1967; NIE 11-6-67, "Soviet Strategy and Intentions in the Mediterranean Basin," dated 1 June 1967; and SNIE 11-13-67, "Probable Soviet Objectives in Rearming the Arabs," dated 20 July 1967.

SECRET

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3. The particular matter of Soviet naval activity in the Mediterranean to which Admiral Johnson referred is discussed at some length in NIE 11-6-67. You may want to call his attention to paragraphs 20-25 of that paper.

4. It is possible that he would not agree with what is said there about the significance of the Soviet naval presence in the Mediterranean. As you well know, one of our problems in writing national intelligence is that certain individuals and bureaucratic interests have their own hobby-horses and are not always happy with the words and judgments which appear in NIEs. Since I was principally responsible for the production and coordination of 11-6-67, I can personally testify that what appeared there on the Soviet naval presence in the Mediterranean had the full accord of the Navy's representatives, and was not even particularly controversial during the process of coordination.

  
Acting Director/  
National Estimates

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